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General Assembly
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Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 7 July 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

The escalation of deadly violence and terror being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people compels me to write to you again today to urgently draw the attention of the international community to this dangerous situation. In grave violation of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and relevant human rights provisions, for over three weeks, the occupying Power has been carrying out a series of military assaults, including air strikes, against civilians and civilian areas that have led to the killing of at least 25 Palestinians, including three children, and the wounding of at least 250 civilians, including women and children, many who remain in serious condition. The extremely fragile situation in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, is rapidly worsening and risks further destabilization as a result of this Israeli aggression and the incessant illegal actions being perpetrated against the Palestinian civilian population, including the unrelenting incitement by Israeli government officials as well as violence and terror by the occupying forces, settlers and other extremists.

The Palestinian death toll continues to rise as Israel, the occupying Power, continues to traumatize and terrorize the more than 1.7 million Palestinians living in the besieged Gaza Strip. Since 12 June 2014, the Palestinian people in the besieged Gaza Strip have had to endure nearly nightly military air raids. Between yesterday and today, Israeli occupying forces killed nine Palestinians and injured many others, including two teenage girls and a child, in airstrikes launched across the Gaza Strip. The continuous climb in the number of casualties is reflective of Israel's ongoing bloody onslaught against the Palestinian population in the Occupied Gaza Strip, in complete disregard and violation of all norms and rules of international humanitarian and human rights law.

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Moreover, in our letter dated 2 July 2014, we referred to the intensifying acts of terror and racist hate crimes being perpetrated by illegal Israeli settlers as well as other Israeli extremists against Palestinian civilians, including children. In this regard, we must reiterate our condemnation in the strongest terms of the kidnapping, torture and burning of Mohammed Abu Khdeir by terrorist Israeli settlers. Since then, more information has become available regarding the cruel murder of young Mohammed, including post-mortem findings of soot deposits in his lungs that prove Mohammed was still alive when he was set on fire. The examination also found that burns covered 90 per cent of his small body. The Palestinian leadership holds the Israeli government responsible for this atrocious crime and the culture of impunity in which Israeli settler terrorists have so vilely and continuously assaulted Palestinian civilians and properties over the years. The Palestinian leadership calls for a speedy, independent, transparent and credible investigation into the murder of Mohammed and calls for the perpetrators of this terrorist crime to be held fully accountable and brought to justice.

In this connection, we must also bring to your attention the brutal beating by Israeli occupying forces of Palestinian-American Tariq Abu Khdeir (age 15), a cousin of Mohammed, on 2 July 2014. Tariq was outside his murdered cousin's home in the neighbourhood of Shufaat, in Occupied East Jerusalem, when he was taken by the occupying forces, the so-called "Israeli border police". Two videos of the horrific incident were posted online and show the Israeli forces repeatedly hitting Tariq, who was cuffed and lying on the floor. In the video, one of the so-called border police was shown kicking and punching Tariq in the face and the head while another sat on top of him. Tariq was then dragged away completely unconscious. A seriously injured Tariq was denied medical care for five hours and held without charge until yesterday, and then was placed under house arrest. This type of excessive, indiscriminate and brutal force has become the norm of the occupying Power, as hundreds of innocent Palestinians have met the same fate as Tariq, the only difference being that the vicious beating of Tariq was captured on camera for the entire world to witness the brutality of the occupying Power. We call also for a transparent, credible investigation into the beating of Tariq and call for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.

At the same time, indiscriminate force continues to be unleashed by the occupying forces against Palestinian civilian protesters throughout the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, and has intensified in the period following the burial of Mohammed Abu Kdheir. In this regard, more than 60 Palestinians were injured during protests in Occupied East Jerusalem, in addition to 200 other Palestinians who were injured in other parts of the Occupied State of Palestine, including in and around the refugee camps in Al-Khalil. In this regard, Israeli occupying forces routinely fire tear gas, stun grenades, rubber-coated metal bullets and live ammunition at the protestors, causing dozens of injuries, many critical.

Moreover, extremist settlers, who have received encouragement from Israeli political figures and government officials, continue their escalation of attacks and their campaign of terror, violence and provocation against the Palestinian civilian population. Following the kidnapping and the burning alive of Mohammed, Israeli settlers continue to run rampant throughout Palestine with the tacit support of the Israeli government, whose armed forces guard these settler militias as they commit their crimes against defenceless Palestinian civilians, with over 130 attacks by settlers recorded in just the past 10 days.

In this connection, on 5 July 2014, 22-year-old Tariq Ziad Zuhdi Adeli was abducted by settlers near Nablus in the northern West Bank. The terrorist settlers drove Tariq to a remote area, attacked him with a hatchet and left him bleeding and severely injured. On that same day, Israeli settlers attacked the car of a Christian Palestinian cleric with rocks and iron bars near Ramallah, and more than 50 terrorist settlers also rampaged through Sheikh Jarrah in Occupied East Jerusalem, assaulting Palestinians and vandalizing homes.

At the same time, since 12 June, Israeli occupying forces have conducted 800 violent military raids on Palestinian homes, villages, towns and cities across the West Bank, arresting and detaining hundreds of Palestinians. At least 850 Palestinians have been arrested since 12 June, including 60 prisoners released in the exchange deal of 2011 and 12 members of the Palestinian Parliament, bringing the number of imprisoned Palestinian parliamentarians to 22. Around 170 of the Palestinians who were arrested during this period are now being held under administrative detention, the worst form of arbitrary detention, bringing the number of Palestinians being held under administrative detention to over 350 out of a total of nearly 6,000 Palestinians being held in Israeli jails and detention centres. We call for the immediate release of all Palestinian prisoners and detainees.

As more innocent Palestinians, including children and women, continue to be killed with no end in sight, as Israel continues its military attacks and measures of collective punishment and its terrorist settlers continue to commit atrocities against the Palestinian civilian population, the international community must do all in its power to compel Israel to immediately cease all of its military aggression and scrupulously abide by all of its obligations as the occupying Power, under international law and relevant United Nations resolutions, including the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949. In this regard, we continue to call upon the international community to ensure immediate protection for the Palestinian civilian population in accordance with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and in recognition of the fact that Israel, the occupying Power, has abdicated this responsibility. Specifically, we call upon the Security Council to fulfil its duties in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and take concrete measures to end Israeli aggression against our people. The international community cannot allow the occupying Power or its illegal settlers to continue to act with such flagrant impunity and disrespect for the law, which has resulted in widespread death, injury and suffering among the defenceless Palestinian civilian population, and which if not stopped will surely lead to much more senseless bloodshed.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 502 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 3 July 2014 (A/ES-10/635-S/2014/471) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations